



MUMBAI

American Center Bulletin

SEPTEMBER

2008

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

BY SUZANNE YOUNTCHI

The International Day of Peace was established by a United Nations resolution in 1981 to promote the ideals of peace and coincide with the opening of the General Assembly. This was first inaugurated on the third Tuesday of September 1982. Beginning on the 20th anniversary in 2002, the UN General Assembly designated September 21 as the International Day of Peace. Although peace is commemorated by various organizations and groups on other dates, the International Day of Peace is the only official commemoration declared by the UN.

Why Was the International Day of Peace Established?

In 1981, the General Assembly passed a UN Resolution (UN/A/RES/36/67) establishing that the purpose of this day is to:

"Devote a specific time to concentrate the efforts of the United Nations and its Member States, as well as of the whole of mankind, to promoting the ideals of peace and to giving positive evidence of their commitment to peace in all viable ways... (The International Day of Peace) should be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples."

The Assembly's resolution declared that the International Day of Peace

"will serve as a reminder to all peoples that our Organization, with all its limitations, is a living instrument in the service of peace and should serve all of us here within the Organization as a constantly pealing bell reminding us that our permanent commitment, above all interests or differences of any kind, is to peace. May this Peace Day indeed be a day of peace."

The amended Resolution (UN/A/RES/55/282) adopted in 2001, permanently fixed the date of the International Day of Peace to September 21.

"The Assembly, reaffirming the contribution that the observance and celebration of the International Day of Peace make in strengthening the ideals of peace and alleviating tensions and causes of conflict, (decided that) beginning with the fifty-seventh session, the Day should be observed on 21 September each year, with this date to be brought to the attention of all people for the celebration and observance of peace."

Moreover, the new Resolution added that the call for the International Day of Peace be a Global Ceasefire:

"Declares that the International Day of Peace shall henceforth be observed as a day of global ceasefire and nonviolence, an invitation to all nations and people to honor a cessation of hostilities for the duration of the Day..."

How Does the United Nations Celebrate International Peace Day?

Each year, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, a ceremony near the Peace Bell is held to celebrate International Peace Day. The bell, made from coins donated by people from some 60 countries, was a gift to the United Nations by the United Nations Association of Japan. The Peace bell is located in the West Court Garden on the front lawn of the UN Secretariat building.

Usually at 10:00 a.m. local time on this day, the United Nations Secretary General delivers a special message before ringing the bell and calls upon people throughout the world to reflect for a moment on the universal goal of peace.

Following the moment of silence, the President of the Security Council makes a statement on behalf of the members of the Council. Later in the day, the regular session of the General Assembly begins its work.

The President of the Assembly invites the delegates to stand for a minute of silence in observance of the Day at 3:00 p.m.

This year, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon will ring the Peace Bell at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in the company of the UN Messengers of Peace. He has called for a 24-hour cessation of hostilities on September 21, and for a minute of silence to be observed around the world at noon local time.

On June 21, a hundred days before the International Day of Peace, the Secretary General issued a video message to the world about commemorating this day. In the message he said:

"In 100 days, the world will take part in the International Day of Peace. We need to take this day of ceasefire and nonviolence very seriously. We need to start planning for it now. This year, 27 million

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The American Center

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(Monday through Friday)

HOLIDAYS

September 1: Labor Day

September 3: Ganesh Chaturthi

A WORD FROM THE CENTER

It is great to be back in India. As a child growing up in South India, I formed a deep appreciation for the culture and the people and was determined to return to a place where I feel very much at home. So it's exciting to be here, especially at a time like this with an accelerating partnership between our two countries. The U.S.-India relationship is based on shared common values. We are both multi-ethnic democracies committed to the rule of law and freedom of speech and religion. Our strong government-to-government and people-to-people ties grow dramatically every year. The number of Indians studying and living in the United States continues to grow, as does their economic and political influence.

Prior to my assignment to India, my career in international relations and diplomacy brought me to places such as Dar-es-Salaam, Nairobi, La Paz, Colombo, Libreville, Port-au-Prince, Islamabad and Baghdad. Each of these experiences was memorable, whether I was working on governance, political reconciliation and economic development programs in Baghdad, addressing counterterrorism, police and judicial support programs in Pakistan, or managing a large mission during a tumultuous period of instability in Haiti. In an earlier academic career, I lived and worked in Mexico and Guatemala conducting fieldwork on the indigenous cultures of the region. Now, coming full circle is a huge pleasure and I look forward to developing fruitful and long-lasting friendships here in western India.



Paul A. Folmsbee
Consul General

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children in conflict-affected areas are not in school. More than 25 million people are displaced from their homes. Tens of thousands of women are brutalized by sexual violence, one of the most horrendous aspects of conflict today. But there are places where peace has been restored. Much of this has happened with the help of the United Nations which this year celebrates, two 60th anniversaries: those of UN peacekeeping operations and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The people of Sierra Leone and Nepal have voted in democratic elections to heal their countries after years of conflict. In Southern Sudan, hundreds of thousands of children are back in school, following the peace agreement of 2005. Societies are rebuilding in Burundi, Haiti, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste and the former Yugoslavia. These experiences show us that real peace is possible, if we work collectively to make it happen. That is why today, I am asking governments, communities, and individuals to start preparing concrete activities for the International Day of Peace and beyond. On 21 September, let us send a real signal of our universal desire for peace. Thank you very much."

Commemorating the International Day of Peace

Schools, NGOs, governments, and individuals around the world will be taking time on September 21 to promote peace. According to www.internationaldayofpeace.org there are over 3500 events and activities in more than 200 countries commemorating the event.

In the United States, schools and organizations in every state will be holding assemblies, observing a moment of silence, and executing school projects to commemorate the day. One organization called, "Pinwheels

for Peace" has instituted a project for students of all ages to express their feelings about what's going on in the world and in their lives. According to their web site, www.pinwheelsforpeace.com, students create pinwheels and write their thoughts about "war and peace/tolerance/living in harmony with others" on one side. The writing can be poetry, prose, haiku, or essay-style – whatever writing form is appropriate as the children express themselves. On the other side, the students will draw, paint, collage, etc. to visually express their feelings. They will assemble these pinwheels and on International Day of Peace, everyone will "plant" their pinwheels outside (at schools, museum, public places, etc.) as a public statement and as an art exhibit/installation. The spinning of the pinwheels in the wind will spread thoughts and feelings about peace throughout the country, the world. Pinwheels for Peace is an art installation project started in 2005 by two Art teachers, Ann Ayers and Ellen McMillan, who teach at Monarch High School in Coconut Creek, Florida, U.S.A. as a way for students to express their feelings about what's going on in the world and in their lives. The project was quickly embraced by their students and the entire school community and by millions of art teachers, teachers, parents, children and adults who desire peace in our world.

What Can I Do to Commemorate the International Day of Peace?

On September 21, you too can join your peers in promoting peace around the world. Here are some ideas of what you, as an individual, can do to promote peace:

Ring a bell, light a candle for peace.

Ask your place of worship to ring its bells for peace at 12 noon.

Write letters of peace to your local newspaper, or to celebrities asking them to support the International Day of Peace holiday/observance.

In fact, there are all sorts of resources to assist you in promoting peace:

Join people throughout the world in one minute (or more!) of silence this day, and at noon everyday, in our common commitment to peace (<http://www.minuteofsilence.org/>)

Plan a local event. Use schools, places of worship, libraries, parks, or municipal buildings to host events. Use the day to build partnerships within your community. Involve children (<http://www.peacedayevents.org/>)

Ask your government officials to issue a proclamation for the International Day of Peace (<http://www.peaceproclamations.com/>)

Incorporate prayer and meditation into your plans. Join with others to create a global International Day of Peace Vigil (<http://www.idpvigil.com/>)

Use universal invocations/prayers such as May Peace Prevail on Earth (<http://www.worldpeace.org>) and the Great Invocation (http://www.lucistrust.org/en/service_activities/world_goodwill_1)

Promote the day as one dedicated to nonviolence and global ceasefire (<http://www.globalceasefire.org/>)

Plant a peace pole or have a world peace flag ceremony (<http://www.worldpeace.org>)

Participate in a peace-building project that is intergenerational and intercultural (<http://www.cultureofpeace.com/book/>)

The American Corner Celebrates

KnowUSA Quiz – Get to Know the U.S.

The American Corner in Ahmedabad celebrates its fourth anniversary on September 8, 2008. As part of this celebration, there will be a KnowUSA quiz which will test students' knowledge of the United States. The quiz is open to students above 18 from Ahmedabad. Exciting prizes will be awarded to the winning teams – laptops, mobiles and iPods! For details, please contact:

Mukund Patel at the American Corner, Ahmedabad Management Association
Tel: (079) 2630-0452
E-mail: americancorner@amaindia.org
Website: <http://www.amaindia.org/AC>Contact.htm>

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Join alliances of youth organizations uniting for a culture of peace
(<http://www.takingitglobal.org/joingyan/>)

Promote media attention for the Day. UN General Assembly Resolution A/55/282 (<http://www.un.org/events/peaceday/2007/index.shtml>)

Engage in United Nations days and years meditation
(<http://www.unmeditation.org/>)

Musicians – dedicate your September 21 concert for peace
(<http://www.peacedayconcert.org/>)

Be kind, forgiving and compassionate in all relationships, with all circles of life (<http://www.forgivenessworks.org>) (<http://www.beliefnet.com/>)

Become involved in the UN International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World (<http://www.cpn-usa.org>)

Join the peace team with daily practice
(<http://www.newhorizons.org/future/king2.htm>)

Suzanne Yountchi works at the American Consulate General, Mumbai.

Here We Come – The 20/20 Whistle-Stop Tour!

The American Center, Mumbai, will be making whistle-stop visits around western India September 8-16, as part of a nationwide program to have 20 speakers in 20 cities. If you're in Ahmedabad, Surat, Kolhapur, Raipur, Jabalpur or Bhopal, Consulate officers will be in your home towns to talk about a range of subjects from the U.S. elections, to U.S. higher education, to the U.S. legal system. We will also be bringing small samples from our library and film collections. For more information, please contact us at mumbaipublicaffairs@state.gov.

NOTES FROM THE AMERICAN LIBRARY

A Select Webliography on Peace

<http://fpolicy.america.gov/fpolicy/security/index.html>
America.gov – Peace & Security – Creating a more stable world

<http://ipoaonline.org/php/>
International Peace Operations Association

<http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org/>
International Day of Peace

http://memory.loc.gov/learn/community/cc_warandpeace.php
The Library of Congress – Community Center – War and Peace

<http://www.peacecorps.gov/>
Peace Corps

<http://www.serviceforpeace.org/index.php>
Service For Peace

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/ffp/
USAID – Food For Peace

<http://www.unitedforpeace.org/>
United for Peace and Justice

<http://www.usip.org/>
United States Institute of Peace

<http://www.uri.org/>
United Religions Initiative

<http://www.uspeacegovernment.org/>
The US Peace Government

<http://www.worldpeace.org/main.html>
The World Peace Prayer Society

<http://www.peacenow.org/>
Americans For Peace Now – Secure the Dream

<http://www.peacewomen.org/wpsindex.html>
Peace Women – Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/354>
UNESCO – World Heritage – Waterton Glacier International Peace Park

<http://www.ipacademy.org/>
International Peace Institute

<http://www.ipeacci.org/>
International Peace Initiatives

Note: Internet sites included in this listing, other than those of the U.S. Government, should not be construed as an endorsement of the views contained therein.

MUMBAI MONDAYS

A Discussion on
**Hiking the Historic Chesapeake and
Ohio Canal National Historical Park**
led by Dean Tidwell

Monday, September 22

American Center Auditorium

6:00 p.m.

Opening the young American nation to trade with the "Western" frontier, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal followed the unnavigable Potomac River from Washington, D.C. through the Cumberland Gap to Ohio. Competition from the faster railways eventually forced the canal operators to abandon it. Now a National Park, the long trail once used by mules to pull canal boats offers hikers and bicyclists a beautiful forest canopy for recreation and access to sites rich in history.

Dean Tidwell joined the U.S. Department of State in 2004 and served in Rangoon, Burma, before coming to Mumbai. Prior to joining the U.S. Foreign Service, he served for many years with international NGOs in Thailand, Indochina, and India. He spent most of his childhood in India and completed his high school studies in Mussoorie, Uttaranchal. He has a Master of Science degree in Applied Linguistics from Indiana University and a Master of Public Health in Primary Healthcare Management from Mahidol University in Bangkok. He speaks Thai, Hindi, Karen, and Lao. As he has lived most of his life in Asia, he enjoys exploring his native land, the United States, whenever he can. His hobbies are bird watching, playing tennis, and traveling to places off the beaten track. He is married and has two sons who also work for the State Department.

FILMS THIS MONTH

Friday, September 12

Young at Heart (1954, color, 117 mins)

Friday, September 19

A Farewell To Arms (1932, color, 80 mins)

American Center Auditorium

3:30 and 6:30 p.m.



Great musical/drama, based on the 1938 film *Four Daughters*, with Frank Sinatra as a musician who comes to a small town to work with composer Gig Young and winds up stealing fiancée Doris Day from him. Topnotch score includes "Someone to Watch Over Me" and the title tune. With Dorothy Malone and Ethel Barrymore.

Stationed in Italy during World War I, American ambulance driver Gary Cooper falls in love with British nurse Helen Hayes, in this first screen adaptation of Ernest Hemingway's timeless wartime romance. Adolph Menjou costars.



U.S. ELECTIONS 2008

Presidential Candidates on the Economy

Amid voter concerns over economic troubles and a looming record budget deficit, the economy has become a top issue on the campaign trail. With everyday Americans facing higher energy and food prices, in addition to falling home and stock market portfolio values, voters are asking where the two main party candidates stand on this issue.

John McCain

In his 15-page economic plan, McCain says he has a comprehensive economic plan that will create millions of jobs and bring relief to consumers. He says he will balance the government's budget by the end of his first term by reducing the costs of large government programs. McCain has called for tax credits for research and development to encourage companies to be innovative while saving money.

Barack Obama

In his 48-page plan for "strengthening the middle class," Obama says he would provide an immediate \$250 tax cut for workers and their families. Obama proposed a fund to help people refinance their mortgages to avoid foreclosure and provide tax credits to help pay mortgages. He supports raising the minimum wage and increasing job training programs that would help Americans find work in occupations related to clean energy.

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Admission to all American Center programs, restricted to persons over 16, will be on a first-come, first-served basis. The auditorium doors will open 30 minutes before the start of the program.